

Message Text

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46

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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P R 191520Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2412

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

S E C R E T ROME 14120

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 BY DCM

TAGS: PFOR NATO IT

SUBJECT: NATO MINISTERIAL - CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL DIRECTOR

1. DURING THE COURSE OF A LENGTHY LUNCHEON CONVERSATION POL DIR
DUCCI EXPRESSED HIS VIEWS ON BOTH THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING AND
THE COPENHAGEN SUMMIT (SEPTEL).

2. DUCCI CHARACTERIZED THE NATO MINISTERIAL AS HAVING GOTTEN OFF
TO A BAD START BUT HAD IMPROVED TOWARDS THE END TO WHERE IT MIGHT
BE CONSIDERED A "SUCCESS." DUCCI HOLDS TNK VIEW THAT THIS KIND OF
SUCCESS IS NOT ADEQUATE FOR THE NEEDS OF THE ALLIANCE. IN HIS
OPINION THE MEETING DID NOT DO MUCH TO SETTLE THE REALLY IMPORTANT
ISSUES.

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3. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY ABOUT HIS REACTION TO THE PROPOSAL OF
USING THE NAC AS A FORUM FOR MEETINGS WITH THE POL DIRECTORS,
DUCCI WRILY NOTED THAT THE SUGGESTION WAS EVEN ACCEPTABLE TO SOME
OF THE PERMANENT REPS ON THE NAC. SPEAKING PERSONALLY DUCCI SUP-

PORTS THE IDEA PROVIDED IT IS USED SPARINGLY AND FOR MATTERS OF CONSIDERABLE SUBSTANCE. THINKING OUT LOUD HE SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS THE POL DIRECTORS MEETING IN THE NAC SHOULD USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER WORLD POLITICAL/MILITARY PROBLEMS, PARTLY AS AN EDUCATIONAL EFFORT AND PARTLY TO OBTAIN UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT ON US POLICIES OUTSIDE THE NATO AREA. HE NOTED THAT OBVIOUSLY THE MIDEAST HAS GREAT STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE TO THE US AND OVERWHELMING ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE TO THE EUROPEANS. DUCCI DID HOWEVER GO BEYOND THIS AND SUGGESTED THAT THE ALLIANCE COULD EXPLORE THE POLITICAL/MILITARY IMPLICATIONS OF (FOR EXAMPLE) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOVIET-INDIAN OCEAN PRESENCE BASED ON INDIA'S PORTS. THIS WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT AFFECTING THE OVERALL STRATEGIC BALANCE. HE BELIEVES THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS ARE A BETTER GROUP TO DEAL WITH THESE KINDS OF PROBLEMS SINCE THEY MORE TRULY REFLECT GOVT ATTITUDES (THAN PERMREPS) AND ARE IN A BETTER POSITION TO INFLUENCE GOVT POLICIES.

4. NOTING THAT THE ITALIANS WANT A BETTER AND MORE COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND THE EUROPEAN ALLIES, IT WAS POINTED OUT TO DUCCI THAT THE SECRETARY'S ENERGY ACTION GROUP PROPOSAL OFFERED AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING TOGETHER THAT IS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE. BECAUSE OF THE MEETINGS IN COPENHAGEN AND BRUSSELS THE ITALIANS HAVE NOT HAD TIME TO PREPARE A RESPONSE TO OUR MESSAGE OF DEC 14 BUT WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEIR REACTION IS BASICALLY POSITIVE. DUCCI REMARKED THAT THE ITALIAN RESPONSE WOULD BE CONDITIONED BY THE ATTITUDE OF THE EC NINE. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE NITPICKING REACTION OF THE EUROPEAN PRESS ON THIS OFFER BY THE SECRETARY SEEMED TO INDICATE A LACK OF DESIRE TO MOVE AHEAD TOGETHER WHICH SEEMED TO REFLECT OFFICIAL ATTITUDES.

5. DUCCI ADMITTED IT IS DIFFICULT FOR EUROPE TO ACT. (COMMENT: DUCCI WAS OBVIOUSLY TIRED AND, AS NOTED IN REPORTING FROM OTHER POSTS, HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY ON THE MOVE SINCE AUGUST. WE SENSE THAT A COMBINATION OF FATIGUE AND DESPONDENCY OVER THE OIL CRISIS HAS GREATLY DIMINISHED THE DRIVE OF SENIOR ITALIAN DIPLOMATS.)

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6. ON THE SUBJECT OF A NEW EC/US DECLARATION DUCCI SEES MERIT IN A NEW FORMULATION IF ALL THE OTHERS WOULD ACCEPT IT. HE BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT IF WE HAVE ANY INFORMAL IDEAS ON THE SPECIFICS WE SHOULD LET THEM BE KNOWN AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 10 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: mcintyresh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ROME14120
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 XGDS-1 BY DCM
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750029-1751
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731256/abqcegze.tel
Line Count: 101
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ROME
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: mcintyresh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25-Jul-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <17-Sep-2001 by mcintyresh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO MINISTERIAL - CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL DIRECTOR
TAGS: PFOR, IT, NATO
To: STATE INFO ANKARA
ATHENS
BONN
BRUSSELS
COPENHAGEN
THE HAGUE
LISBON

LONDON
LUXEMBOURG
OSLO
OTTAWA
PARIS
NATO
REYKJAVIK

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005